

GRAY COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

FOC MAIL ROOM County CourtHouse - 300 South Main

DEC 24 1996

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Office of the Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
Room 222
1919 M Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Reference: CC Docket No. 96-45

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing regarding the important ramifications to local rural health departments of the 1996 Telecommunications Act. As the local governmental presence in this rural area charged with responsibility for protecting and promoting the health of all the rural residents in the area, the ability to communicate electronically throughout the state and nation is imperative.

Local health departments are very important health care providers. For example, we are charged with responsibility for preventing and curbing epidemics, responding to disasters such as toxic spills, floods, the effects of tornados, hurricanes, etc. In these situations, access to the most up-to-date information from our federal health agencies, such as CDC, FDA is critical. Receiving information from FEMA and other agencies in a timely fashion is critical to developing a systemematic and comprehensive response on the local level. Better access to information and disease-prevention protocols at all times, and especially in emergencies is essential for the provision of health care and will save lives.

We are pleased that local health departments are included in this Act. Linking all of the nation's rural health departments will assure that a information infrastructure is available for all Americans.

Sincerely,

Kathy Ryan, R.N.

Kathy Ryan, R.N.
Administrator

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Questions to Address:

1. Name of project:

CDC Wonder

2. Please list each of the project's sites:

Name of Site:

State in which it is located:

GRAY County Health Dept.KANSAS

Please answer the following questions for each of your sites.
Use additional sheets if necessary.

3. What is the nearest city of population equal to or greater than 50,00 in your state, and approximately how far are you from its boundary?

City: Wichita Distance from city boundary: 172

4. Name of the project's telecommunications service provider:

5. Level of telecommunications service the project is currently using: (For example, voice grade, 144 Kbps (ISDN), 384 Kbps, T-1 or equivalent)

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6. Charges for telecommunications service:

Is there a monthly charge? No ☒ Yes ☐
If yes, how much is the charge? _____

Is there a usage-based charge? No ☒ Yes ☐
If yes, how much is the charge? _____

Is there a distance component (such as a per-mile fee) of the charge? No ☒ Yes ☐
If yes, how much is the charge? _____

Was there an installation fee? No ☒ Yes ☐
If yes, how much was the charge? _____

Is the charge the regular tariffed rate, or is there a discount from the telecommunications provider? Tariffed ☐ Discount ☐
If there is a discount, how much is it? _____

7. How does the project use telecommunications in the delivery of health care? (For example -- to send x-rays, distribute public health information, or perform video consultations. Please identify any occasional or episodic uses, such as might result from an outbreak of disease.)

Distributes public health information
Valuable information about disease outbreaks,
vaccine recalls toxic spills and
education of what to do in such cases, etc.

Many times I receive this information on
CDC wonder 2-3 days before I receive it
by mail. This time could be critical!

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8. Could the project provide the services it is currently providing with less bandwidth? What effect would a lesser level of bandwidth have? (The implications of using greater or lesser levels of telecommunications services are related to image transmission time. What would the be the impact if the health care activities for which you now use telecommunications took twice as long, or if they could be completed in half the time?)

No! We small rural health departments are understaffed, and expected to do a myriad of programs. Time is of the essence! Also the distance we are from any large areas where they have the people with the knowledge is too great. At this time, there are times that it would be very helpful if CDC wonder was faster!

9. What would the implications of having a greater level of bandwidth be?

See above. We would have the information much quicker, and less time spent waiting.

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10. Do you have e-mail? No ☐ Yes ☒11. Do you have Internet access? No ☒ Yes ☐

If yes, do you incur long-distance charges by using it?

No ☐ Yes ☐

Please estimate your number of hours of Internet use per month:

Would like to have internet, would have more access to other health resources.

12. If you have access to the Internet, please list any purposes other than e-mail (such as accessing databases such as Lexis/Nexis) for which you use it:
